



# **Draft Water Quality Best Management Practices for Agricultural Use of Clothianidin & Imidacloprid**

Summary of Public  
Comments & Responses

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Minnesota Department of Agriculture  
Pesticide and Fertilizer Management Division

**Minnesota Department of Agriculture**  
625 Robert St N  
St. Paul, MN  
55155

**Please direct inquiries about this document to:**

Theresa Cira  
[Theresa.Cira@state.mn.us](mailto:Theresa.Cira@state.mn.us)  
651-201-6237

or

Kathleen (Kate) Hall  
[Kathleen.Hall@state.mn.us](mailto:Kathleen.Hall@state.mn.us)  
651-201-6267

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## Background

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On November 21, 2022, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) announced the start of a 60-day public comment period for the newly developed Draft Water Quality Best Management Practices (BMPs) for Agricultural Use of Clothianidin and Imidacloprid in the Minnesota State Register ([47 SR 475](#)). Comments were accepted through January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

[Excerpt from State Register Announcement]

*The Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) is requesting public comment on draft water quality best management practices (BMPs) for agricultural use of two neonicotinoid insecticides, clothianidin and imidacloprid. The BMPs were developed by the MDA in consultation with the University of Minnesota Extension and others to address impacts from clothianidin and imidacloprid on water resources.*

*In December 2020, the Commissioner announced the final decision (45 SR 557) to designate clothianidin and imidacloprid as “surface water pesticides of concern” in accordance with the state Pesticide Management Plan. Designation as “surface water pesticides of concern” initiated the development of pesticide specific BMPs. These BMPs detail the best approaches and applications to consider when using clothianidin and imidacloprid to protect surface waters.*

## Comments Received

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Comments were received from two individuals and the following entities during the open public comment period:

- Bayer CropScience
- Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

All comments were carefully reviewed and considered. The MDA has responded to relevant comments below. Comments with a common theme have been combined.

### Comment #1

#### **Comment Summary:**

The commentors support the development and promotion of BMPs.

#### **MDA Response:**

The MDA appreciates the feedback in support of the draft BMPs.

## Comment #2

### Comment Summary:

The commentor states that clothianidin and imidacloprid should be entirely banned from all uses in Minnesota. The commentor notes concerns related to widespread contamination and impacts on insects and bird populations as well as white-tailed deer.

### MDA Response:

The MDA follows the [Minnesota Pesticide Management Plan \(PMP\)](#) to prevent, evaluate, and mitigate contamination in waters of the state by pesticides or pesticide breakdown products. In accordance with the PMP, the MDA designated clothianidin and imidacloprid as “surface water pesticides of concern” and is in the process of developing pesticide specific BMPs. Comments were requested specifically on the draft BMPs. Changes to the registration of clothianidin and imidacloprid are beyond the scope of comments being considered by the MDA at this time. The MDA is aware of the research and monitoring of neonicotinoids in wildlife.

## Comment #3

### Comment Summary:

The commentor notes that while it is understood that clothianidin and imidacloprid are the focal points of the draft BMPs, many of the proposed BMPs could be applicable to many different active ingredients. As such, the title of the document may be slightly misrepresentative.

### MDA Response:

The MDA recognizes that many pesticide BMPs to protect water quality apply to multiple active ingredients. For this reason, the MDA has developed and continues to promote sets of generic BMPs for [all agricultural insecticides](#) and [all agricultural herbicides](#). When pesticides are designated as “surface water pesticides of concern,” the [Minnesota Pesticide Management Plan](#) directs the MDA to develop pesticide specific BMPs. Therefore, the new draft water quality BMPs for agricultural use of clothianidin and imidacloprid were developed directly in response to their designation as “surface water pesticides of concern.”

## Comment #4

### Comment Summary:

The commentor notes that the inclusion of seed bag disposal information in section 7 would be valuable.

### MDA Response:

The MDA agrees that the inclusion of seed bag disposal information would be valuable and has added the following text to the final version of the BMPs:

“Empty disposable packaging from treated seed, such as bags, may be disposed of with normal solid waste unless otherwise indicated on the label.”

More information on treated seed and packaging disposal is also available under Additional Resources ([Disposal of Treated Seed](#) – Minnesota Pollution Control Agency).

## Comment #5

### **Comment Summary:**

The commentor emphasizes the importance of monitoring the state’s waterways to assess the effectiveness of the proposed BMPs. The commentor firmly supports the MDA’s monitoring efforts and notes that the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency is continuing work to develop water quality standards for clothianidin and imidacloprid.

### **MDA Response:**

The MDA agrees that monitoring of the state’s waterways is critical to evaluating the proposed BMPs and plans to continue its monitoring efforts. The MDA greatly appreciates the work being done by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to develop water quality standards for clothianidin and imidacloprid.